

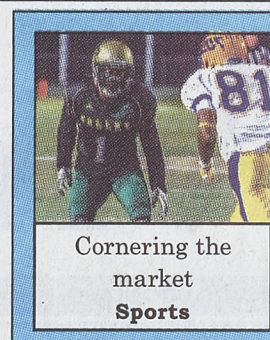
THE VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT MEDIA OUTLET OF
LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

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Cornering the
market
Sports



Beastly autumn
films
Valley Life



Yes, it's
Oscar bait
Valley Life

VALLEY LIFELINE

You can go to Health

■ Help for the body and mind is available on campus.

By KYLA HULETT
COPY EDITOR

With the fall semester in full swing and many changes happening on campus, there are still health services available to students, faculty, and staff. For now, there are delegated offices for different services but there is not a building as a whole that is being used to service the mental and physical health of our Monarch student body.

For all safety and medical emergencies on campus call the campus sheriff at (818) 947-2911.

The medical office is located in the North Gym, it can be reached at (818) 947-2918 Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.. The office usually operates by appointment only for basic medical needs and wellness checks.

The psychology office is located in the Campus Center building in Room 108. It is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.. The office can be reached at (818) 778-5708 for information or to schedule an appointment. To view its walk-in hours, visit <http://lavc.edu/student-health/index.aspx>.

During the construction of the new Student Health Center, the LAVC Student Health Center and the Kinesiology Departments are hosting a series of weekly wellness activities over the next few months for students and faculty to attend. They're called Wellness and Fitness Happy Hour and are being held from 9/15-11/18. People have the opportunity to attend nine free sessions of their choosing on the calendar of activities. The calendar for the dates and locations on campus is at <http://lavc.edu/studenthealth/library/images/Happyhourflyer2.aspx>.

The brand new Student Health Center is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2016. The building's sole purpose will be to provide a place students can come for basic health and if someone is in need of psychological help, those offices will be housed there as well.

ELSEWHERE IN THE VALLEY STAR

Republican contenders' economic policies

The Star continues its look at the issues of importance to Monarchs in the 2016 election with the GOP hopefuls' economic plans.

please see GOP, p. 2

Additional content online
www.thevalleystar.com



COMO LA FLOR - A Hispanic Heritage celebration was held at the Los Angeles Zoo Sunday featuring native dances and festivities.

VALLEY PEOPLE

Not just a pretty face

■ This combat veteran knows a lot about being fierce.

By JAZMINE SANCHEZ
STAFF WRITER

A tall, pale-skinned figure enters the stage wrapped in a black, head-turning sequined dress, atop a pair of gray, satin, 4-inch peep-toe pumps that require confidence with every step. From the sun-kissed auburn wig to the bright, ruby-red lips, the performer wins your attention with one flash of those ice-blue eyes.

This fierce, feminine singer belting out "I Am What I Am" at this Valley College Players Club event in May is a 36-year-old U.S. combat veteran majoring in theater arts. His name is Peter Nuoffer.

The first time he had ever dressed up as a woman was in seventh grade, when he took part in a traditional Shakespearean play in Arkansas. The frailest of the boys at just 5'4" and weighing 112 lbs, he played the female roles of Juliet, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, Olivia, and Beatrice from Much Ado About Nothing.

"I had been involved with acting for quite a bit so I was really excited ... but at the same time I was like, 'No, I'm a dude.'"



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALVIN CUADRA, PHOTO OF PETER NUOFFER BY BECKY ARNTZEN/VALLEY STAR
LADY BY NIGHT - Army veteran and actor, Peter Nuoffer, is not your typical All-American man.

It was more than 20 years later when Nuoffer's life would take up a career as a drag performer. It began in 2005 in South Korea, where a soldier

in his group had a run-in with a transgendered woman. As a joke, Nuoffer and his friends decided he would dress as a woman on Halloween and convince his friend to buy Nuoffer a drink. He never found

his friend, but Nuoffer had done such a great job that his first-line supervisor even tried to chat him up. When he realized who Nuoffer was, he ran away.

The following
please see Drag, p. 3

CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION

A haven for Monarchs

■ The new Monarch Center building.

By MELINDA HENRICKS
STAFF WRITER

After two years of facing limited food services and few places to hang out, Valley College Students will welcome Monarch Center in Spring 2016. According to school officials, the "heart of the campus" will encompass the cafeteria, bookstore, and a student lounge where students can mingle, relax,

dine and engage.

The 38, 168-square-foot facility will be a split-level building that will offer indoor- and outdoor- dining. The lounge area includes two-level atrium. The idea was for the building to "offer sustainability from the ground into the sky," said Steve Flanigan of LPA Architects.

McCarthy Builders along with LPA Architects "won this design project with creativity" and a vision of what

students today desire. The building is covered by a rain canopy that collects rainwater and redistributes the water via a waterfall into the park that runs through, underneath, and around the plaza. Flanigan said that the "green design plans are essential. Students today want to contribute to the environment."

This mixed use-space has been designed with what the builder describes as "exciting vibrant colors."

There are a variety of choices such as soft chairs, hard spaces, outdoor spaces, quiet spaces, and additional places for games such as ping-pong and billiards. Finally, there will be a place where events can be held as well as club meetings, bands, and fundraising events.

The intention was to provide a "green design plan" with unique features that would hold both interest and comfort for the needs of
please see Center, p. 3

El Niño is coming to wet you

■ A little boy with a big attitude is heading Los Angeles' way.

By ZACHARY SIERRA
STAFF WRITER

Most people reading this may not recall the last time an El Niño rated "very strong" graced us with its presence. Since 1951, there have only been two systems as strong as this one is expected to be.

Remembering those storms, ex-Malibu Mayor Lou Lamonte said, "There was water everywhere; it was Biblical. I can't believe how bad it was." Malibu lost a pier, a bridge, and several roads during the eight-plus months of intense storms. The El Niño that now seems assured for this winter has the potential to overshadow even the destruction of 16 years ago, the largest on record.

El Niño is caused by oscillation in the water temperature across the equatorial Pacific. Differences of as little as 1 degree Celsius can cause radical shifts in global temperatures and rain patterns. For L.A. this means more rain - a lot more.

This may sound like a godsend for dried-up Los Angeles, but it may cause many more problems than it solves.

While much-needed precipitation will likely increase, most of it may come in torrential downpours. The type of rainfall best for restoration from drought conditions is described by the U.S. Geological Survey as a "soaking rain" (a period of protracted drizzle or light rain fall that does not cause significant flooding) or heavy mountain snowfall that can melt come spring. Thunderstorms and monsoon-style rains are often not absorbed into the water table due to the speed at which they dissipate and

please see El Niño, p. 3



NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
OH NOAA - Tracking of global sea temperatures shows current equatorial conditions similar to the largest El Niño on record, but with considerably more warm water in the northern hemisphere.

PERFORMING ARTS

From China with love ... of music

USC musicians bring ultra violins and cause pianist envy.

BY JESSICA PEREZ
CONTRIBUTOR

Yabing Tang's proudest moment may have come at the Premio Paganini International Violin Competition in Genova, Italy.

"It was two movements from the Bach Sonata No.2 and three Paganini caprices. I was simply enjoying the music; I forgot everything around me, it was only me and the music and the emotional moment I brought to the audience."

She received the Best Interpretation for Paganini Caprices prize, the greatest gift she could have asked for on her 25th birthday.

Sisi Ye was only 4 when she was motivated by the piano's variety and wide range of sounds to pursue it. Her first competition was at age 5. Though she doesn't recall much, she was moved by an audience member who offered kind words after her performance. She realized she could reach the audience through her music.

At the 2012 USC Thornton School of Music Concerto Competition, she performed a piece by

Beethoven.

"It was was the first time I got to choose the piece I wanted to play and I won playing my beloved Beethoven!"

The talented USC students and roommates will perform together at the Recital Hall at Valley College Oct. 7. The friends are also in a piano trio and plan to record their first album next summer in their home provinces of Guangzhou and Guangdong, Southern China. They'll be mainly focusing on French masterpieces by César Franck, Claude Debussy, and Maurice Ravel.

Ye is 32 and will graduate by the end of this year; Tang is 25 and will graduate by 2017. Their instructor, Midori Goto, encouraged Yabing to play at the October recital at Valley College, and Yabing asked Ye to join her. They declined to specify their program, but the repertoire will include works from the Baroque and Romantic periods, as well as some French music. Tang said the selections show how the two instruments collaborate and how they create different sensations together.

er.

Both musicians' dedication to their craft is rigorous. Before a performance, Yabing rehearses four-to-five hours a day. There will be one hour of basic technique, such as scales, then she will fix issues by going through different pieces with the metronome.

"It's is the moment that every cell of my body focuses on practicing," says Tang. "It feels nothing can disturb me from practicing, my ears keep listening, my brain keeps trying to figure out what the issues are and how to make things better. It's intense but very satisfying!"

Right before a concert, she avoids eating and only eats bananas two hours before a performance. Ye will rehearse a difficult technical spot intensely and generally practices eight hours per day for two months to be fully prepared.

"A pianist should devote mind and body in every practice session; it's physical and intellectual but can be transcending for an artist," Ye says.

Yabing Tang and Sisi Ye perform Oct. 7 at 1 p.m. at the Recital Hall. Admission is free.

CAMPUS STYLE

Black is the new black

BY JAZMINE SANCHEZ
STAFF WRITER

A tall guy with wispy black hair exits the behavioral science building dressed in mysterious black, including scuffed boots and cheetah sunglasses.

"I like fashion," says David Castaneda. "I kind of dress casual/professional and I wear a lot of black."

Animation major David Castaneda, 21, plans to transfer to any university that offers an animation degree.

He advocates for no-label fashion and says everything he wears is for comfort, but there are some rules to that.

"Sweat pants every day is not the thing," he says.

Despite his monochrome appearance today, Castaneda is all for colors - as long as they go together.

"Match your colors! You can't have three shades of blue on you."

He truly enjoys the art of "thrifting" because when purchasing certain items



JAZMINE SANCHEZ / VALLEY STAR

MAN IN BLACK - David Castaneda will walk the line for fashion.

he doesn't have to worry about a huge logo being seen across his t-shirt.

"I like it when things

are subtle. You can wear what you like, like brands, but I prefer a small logo on the bottom of my shirt."

FALL MOVIE PREVIEW - AWARDS CONTENDERS



NETFLIX / BLEECKER STREET ENTERTAINMENT

THE BEAST OF MY LOVE - The Commandant (Idris Elba) leads boy soldiers in "Beasts of No Nation."

The autumn gold rush

From bad men to strong women, here come the Oscar contenders.

BY CONNIE GERAGHTY
STAFF WRITER

Now that it's officially fall, it's officially time to start talking about February. That's right, awards season is upon us and the speculations are already flying. These are a few of the films getting early buzz.

Johnny Depp has starred in a slew of big budget letdowns in recent years, but has been receiving high praise for his portrayal of infamous Boston mobster James "Whitey" Bulger in writer-director Scott Cooper's "Black Mass." Critics and audiences have agreed Depp's chilling performance is likely award worthy.

"The Danish Girl" tackles the incredible true story of Lili Elbe, one of the first people to undergo total gender reassignment surgery, and is getting attention in several categories.

ries. Possible actor (Oscar winner Eddie Redmayne), supporting actress (Alicia Vikander) and picture nominations are circling.

"Joy" brings the award-winning team of David O. Russell, Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper together for a third time in this generation-spanning film that chronicles the life of Joy Manago, a single mother, inventor and entrepreneur. The trio's previous collaborations garnered both Lawrence and Cooper two Oscar nominations each and four for Russell.

Leonardo DiCaprio is frontiersman Hugh Glass in "The Revenant," Alejandro G. Iñárritu's first film since 2014's multiple Oscar-winning "Birdman: (Or The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)." With the focus on Glass's struggle to survive after being abandoned following a brutal bear mauling, DiCaprio's performance will be under

the spotlight. He has four acting nominations but no wins.

"Carol" stars Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara as strangers whose chance meeting leads to a tumultuous affair that rocks not only their lives but the lives of everyone around them. Todd Haynes' adaptation of the 1952 novel "The Price of Salt" by Patricia Highsmith has been receiving rave reviews, especially for the two central performances.

"Beasts of No Nation" could be the first Netflix original to win an Oscar. From writer-director Cary Fukunaga of "True Detective" (Season One) fame comes the story of Agu, a child forced to become a soldier after his village is raided by militant forces. Idris Elba is generating buzz as "The Commandant," but young newcomer Abraham Attah is already winning awards for his first lead role.

ELECTION 2016 - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Read their lips: GOP contenders' econ hopes

Where the current top five candidates would drive, given the keys.

BY KIMIYA MANOOCHHEHRI
STAFF WRITER

The GOP orthodoxy to which many of the many Republican presidential candidates subscribe includes such staples as across-the-board tax cuts and deregulation of trade. But as with their Democratic counterparts, these candidates are bringing their own economic savvy to their platforms.

Businessman Donald Trump has garnered strong support for his extreme rhetoric, but straddles the fence on economic issues. He declared in a CNN interview that he's "a free trader," but opposed President Obama's Trans-Pacific Partnership (modeled after NAFTA). He also claims he'll bring jobs back from overseas by shutting down free-trade agreements, but economists say that the tariffs he wants to impose on China would start a trade war. He says a federal minimum wage is necessary, but doesn't think it should be increased from \$7.25. Trump has defended his intention to raise taxes on the wealthy in the past, a concept which the base has historically opposed, but recently unveiled a tax plan that would reduce the top earners' income tax rate from 40 percent to 25 percent. His plan would also increase the number of low-income families who don't pay any income tax, according



Donald Trump
Michael Vadon

to Alan Cole of the Tax Foundation.

Retired neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson has set some ambitious goals to rewire the economy. He supports a Constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget and vowed to eliminate the national debt within a decade. His strategies for making this additional revenue are unclear, especially after basing his flat-tax proposal on religious tithing. On Fox News Sunday he said all Americans should be taxed the same 10 percent regardless of their income. When host Chris Wallace said for the government to continue raising money at the present level, the flat tax rate would have to be higher than 20 percent, Carson rejected Wallace's sources.

During Carly Fiorina's six-year tenure as CEO of Hewlett-Packard, the company's stock lost nearly half its value and HP laid off 30,000 employees. Like senators Rand Paul, Ted Cruz, and Marco Rubio, Fiorina signed the Americans for Tax Reform Taxpayer Protection Pledge to not vote for any new or increased taxes. She is the sole candidate to believe minimum wage should be a state-affair, not a federal



Dr. Ben Carson
Gage Skidmore



Carly Fiorina
Michael Vadon



Gov. Jeb Bush
Gage Skidmore

one. Former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush plans to award the wealthiest Americans a major tax cut. Bush intends to marry his support for free trade with a plan to create jobs in the energy sector. Details released to Reuters confirm "Bush will call for lifting a U.S. ban on crude oil exports and lift restrictions on natural gas exports that have made it harder to export energy to countries like Japan, China and the European Union." Bush opposed both the Obama administration's stimulus package and its plan to reduce climate emissions. He has proposed the end of the minimum wage altogether.

Trailing closely behind Bush, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Florida) intends to adjust tax credits in accordance to family size and cut corporate taxes, and place a ceiling on federal regulations to "empower and protect the private sector," but also keep a top individual income rate of 35 percent, higher than many Republicans would like. Rubio has also committed to lifting the ban on crude oil exports and deregulating oil and gas development. His jobs plan concentrates mostly on innovation and the expansion of technology.



Sen. Marco Rubio
U.S. Senate

SPORTS

3

FOOTBALL

NOLA bred, Cali fed

■ Eric Jenkins exemplifies the skills needed to play cornerback on and off the field.

By KEVIN BUCKLES JR.
SPORTS EDITOR

Eric Jenkins' sly smile, showing his gold caps on either side of his two front teeth, along with his distinct New Orleans accent makes him easy to spot on campus.

That accent can also be easily identified from the 22-year-old sophomore cornerback when he is trash-talking to opponents when he and the Monarchs take the field every Saturday.

"I love playing cornerback and going up against the best," said Jenkins. "You know when I'm making plays and shutting them down, I'm going to [trash] talk to them."

Making plays is what Jenkins has done since he stepped foot onto Valley's field in 2014, leading the Monarchs in interceptions each of the past two seasons, and being named the team's Defensive MVP last year.

Some of the most important qualities needed to excel at the cornerback position, as Jenkins has, are fluidity, adaptability, and to remain undeterred — all qualities that he has been forced to possess, off of the field, since he was 12 years old.

In Aug. 2005, Jenkins, the fourth oldest of his mother's eight children, and his family were a part

of the tens of thousands of New Orleanians to endure Hurricane Katrina in their own homes. Winds reaching 175mph and violent rains left his St. Bernard Projects neighborhood and entire city underwater.

"You loot, we shoot," that was crazy to see," said Jenkins referring to a sign he remembered reading around the city after his family was transported via boat to the Superdome from their house.

"At the Superdome I saw people get killed. People were going to Canal St. to get guns, and coming back to shoot people and to protect themselves. People were getting raped in there too, I saw it all ... it was a crazy experience, I'll never forget."

In the five years following Katrina, Jenkins adapted having to move constantly: from New Orleans to Ft. Worth, TX, to Dallas, TX, back to New Orleans, back to Ft. Worth, and then finally back in New Orleans for good during the second half of his freshman year of high school at Miller McCoy Academy where he played basketball and football.

"We had a nice basketball team at [Miller] McCoy but I stopped playing more on football because I knew I wasn't going to be that tall," said Jenkins.

An athletic 5'10, 181-pound young man in high

school was an ideal size to excel at playing football however, which Jenkins did at Miller McCoy up until his junior year when others began to take notice.

"Miller McCoy always had a lot of talent, and Eric was no different," said former Eleanor McMinn Mustangs defensive coordinator, and former New Orleans Saints safety, Mel Mitchell, who helped convinced Jenkins to transfer to McMinn for his senior season. "He was the most athletic and already had the heart and desire that a lot of kids didn't have."

Mitchell added: "What made me take a liking to Eric so much was his background and not having much, with little support from his family."

According to Mitchell and Jenkins, there were days that Jenkins would go without eating just to have enough money to catch the bus from uptown to downtown, New Orleans East, to get to practice.

Practice paid off, as Jenkins made his impact felt immediately, leading the Mustangs in interceptions that season with an eye-popping, 13. But despite his great season, none of his family came to see any of his games.

"No aunts, no uncles, nobody ... it hurt," said Jenkins. "On Senior Night, I didn't have a parent to be

there with me, my coaches [Mitchell and Head Coach Kevin Roussell] had to be my coaches that night."

"It helped motivate me to prove them wrong. My brother [Dwayne Jenkins] helped to keep me out of the streets too and just go to school while he was in the streets. But I kept telling myself, 'if they see how serious I am and how good I am, they'll come,' even though they didn't. My mom has only been to a couple of my games when I was younger because of her jobs and having to take care of my young siblings."

Following his senior year at McMinn, Jenkins again had to adapt to new environments, bouncing from a prep school in Atlanta where he met and trained with Deion Sanders Jr. and his Hall of Fame father, to Southeastern University (where he left due to dissatisfaction with the teams) to, finally, Valley in spring 2014. His first season left 14 different Division I schools impressed enough to offer him a scholarship, including west coast schools, Fresno State, Washington State, and Arizona State. He recently finished weighing his options and committed to the University of Cincinnati. After only two months and a 3-1 start to the season, Valley's new Head Coach Robert Tucker, has



MILENA BRAY / VALLEY STAR

ONE CROWN - Eric Jenkins enjoys his final season as a Monarch before transferring to the Division I, University of Cincinnati.

come away very impressed.

"He reminds me a lot of [Dallas Cowboys cornerback] Orlando Scandrick, and [New Orleans Saints cornerback] Kyle Wilson," said Tucker, who had the opportunity to coach Scandrick and Wilson as a safeties coach at Boise State University. "They are all very fiery on the field. He has so much potential as a person and especially as a football player, the sky is the limit for him."

As far as Jenkins has come, when he joins Cincinnati next season, he

will only consider that as "knocking on the door." Getting into the door for Jenkins will be developing into a prospect that he could enough to be an NFL player, then perhaps coach to help others — as Mel Mitchell did for him.

But when he steps on the field next fall, there will only be one thing on his mind.

"I'm going to have enough money then to fly my mom out to come to my games," said Jenkins. "[Looking into the stands and seeing her] is going to be a dream come true."

Vaccines stand test of time

■ More now, than ever, parents need to realize the necessity of vaccinations for their children.

By MELINDA HENRICKS
STAFF WRITER

Despite current misinformation, vaccines are imperative to the health of our children.

A loving mother paces the hospital, her baby is in the intensive-care unit suffering from deadly meningitis, tubes are everywhere and she can't hold or comfort her daughter.

This mother loves her child and wanted to make an informed choice regarding immunizations. Instead, she became overwhelmed with the controversy surrounding vaccines and she hesitated: her child suffered from a severe case of meningitis.

According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, about 30 percent of parents in the United States hesitate when it comes to vaccinating their children. Due to continued concerns about autism and negativity surrounding vaccines, many parents are now electing not to vaccinate their children.

When parents hesitate to vaccinate their children and ignore science, everyone is at risk. According to the American Drug Administration, vaccine-preventable diseases such as

measles, mumps, whooping cough, and meningitis are still a threat. Outbreaks of preventable diseases occur when parents decide not to vaccinate their children.

The polio outbreak from 1945 to 1960 was essentially eliminated in the United States because of the polio vaccine. Government statistics show that during this time period there were over 35,000 cases annually. By 1961, the vaccine was being given regularly and the number of cases dropped to 17 that year.

Additionally, children that are not vaccinated can spread diseases to children who are too young to be vaccinated, pregnant women, and others with weakened immune systems. Vaccinations are safe and effective. All vaccines undergo careful review by scientists, doctors and the federal government to ensure safety.

The FDA requires 10 or more years of testing for all vaccines. Moreover, vaccines protect the herd. Herd immunity or community immunity means that when a critical portion of the population is vaccinated against a contagious disease, it is unlikely that an outbreak of the disease will occur, thus protecting everyone.

The Committee to

Review Adverse Effects of Vaccines, Ellen Clayton, MD and JD Professor of Pediatrics at Vanderbilt University, and co-author of Adverse Effects of Vaccines, summarized the results of the report as follows: "The MMR vaccine does not cause autism! The MMR and DTaP do not cause type 1 diabetes. And the killed flu vaccine" does not cause Bell's palsy, nor do any of these trigger episodes of asthma."

Parents have the right to make informed health and welfare decisions for their children. Concerns about autism should be overcome by the fact that these combination vaccines have been used successfully since the 1940s. Not until recent years, have autism or other vaccine-related fears become the issues that they are today.

Obviously, parents love their children and want to do the best for their health and safety. It is important to "heed the warnings of experts, Vaccinate your children."

The cost to your child and society can be deadly. Because vaccines have been successful, most people have not experienced diseases in epidemic proportion.

So, don't wait, or hesitate, vaccinate.

'Drag'

continued from page 1

Halloween in El Paso, Texas, Nuoffer didn't have a costume, so he decided to dress up as a woman again. He dressed up in a Britney Spears-inspired schoolgirl outfit. That night, he won \$2,200 in three different costume contests. In about a week and a half, he had learned how to do every move to "Baby One More Time" - in heels. At the first contest he was approached by a talent coordinator for a nightclub called The New Old Plantation, which was partnered with The Mining Company in El Paso, which held drag shows.

"He asked me if I would be interested in being their Britney Spears for a Divas Revue and I immediately

said No. A couple of months later, he called me and he said the girl who normally does their Britney Spears had dropped out and said if I was still interested, it pays \$400 for one night, and I said, 'OK, I'll do it.'"

His career in drag includes shows for the Divas Revue. After winning the Millie Lewis Models and Actors competition in 2008, he was then signed to a Californian talent agency. His TV work has included "My Sister's Keeper" as a transgendered escort, a "CSI episode" in drag, appearances on the Logo Network, and so on. This year he was chosen by Valley student Ruben Hernandez to become a co-host (in drag) for the Valley Collegiate Players Club event in May, "Gender Bent Cabaret."

"Peter had an excite-

ment about him when it came to performing and when he talked about how much fun drag was and his history with it. I knew he was the right choice," says Hernandez. "He was spectacular."

In 2010, he served in combat in Afghanistan. At that time, he discussed with his then-girlfriend (now wife) that it was time to put away that role as a drag performer.

"It takes over your life when you start doing it and so much of it goes into perfecting this appearance of femininity," Peter said, acknowledging that events such as the Gender Bent Cabaret could bring his gowns out of mothballs from time to time. "Would I do it again on stage? Sure I would."

'El Nino'

continued from page 1

the plants' thirsty reaction to the initial rainfall after a long period of dryness. In Los Angeles this is exacerbated by the fact that large amounts of rainfall are directed to the ocean as part of runoff system, meaning even extreme rainfall can have only a superficial effect.

The problems these storms create, however, are not superficial. El Niño has been blamed for thousands of deaths since the phenomenon first came under observation in 1951. From floods to mudslides and even sinkholes, the effects can be swift and deadly. After the 1997-1998 El Niño, road-condition com-

plaints rose over 400 percent here in Los Angeles. This was caused by the extreme rainfall washing away long dry soil beneath streets and sidewalks, causing brittle surfaces to crack due to lack of support. Considering the state's protracted drought, this could be even more drastic than previously seen.

So is Los Angeles ready?

L.A. County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, paired with Mayor Michael D. Antonovich, have introduced a motion on Aug. 18 to request information of our preparedness for a repeat of a "monster" El Niño. So far there has been no information released in response to the motion.

Unfortunately, that is about it. No major steps have been taken to provide

a suitable flood-relief system or additional supplies to be amassed in care of an emergency situation. According to the motion submitted by Solis, there is a 90-percent chance that El Niño will happen this winter, and an 85-percent chance it will extend into spring. This could mean as much as seven months of extreme weather headed to the City of Angels.

The Internet is filled with sites listing common sense protective measures such as avoiding water deeper than six inches and of course the timeless advice to head to higher ground. While they may seem rudimentary, following simple guidelines can prevent injury and death which often accompanies the El Niño system.

For additional content on all things Valley and more, please visit:

TheValleyStar.com

GALLERY



HONORING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH



Photos & Words By Belen Campirano

The Los Angeles Zoo hosted a celebration of Hispanic Heritage month Sunday. The festivities were sponsored by ScholarShare and California's 529 College Savings Plan. Performers included Mariachi Divas by Cindy and Grandeza Mexicana Folk Ballet Company.

The next performers for Grandeza Mexicana will be held at the Downey Civic Theatre, 8435 Firestone Blvd., Downey, CA 90241 on Sunday, Dec. 5 at 7:30p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6 at 2:00p.m. Tickets available at www.downeytheatre.com.

The next performance for Mariachi Divas will be held at the 6th Annual Rosarito Mariachi Festival at Rosarito Beach Hotel in Baja California, Mexico.

